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Substantive session for 1998

PROVISIONAL SUMMARY RECORD OF THE 46th MEETING

Held at Headquarters, New York,
on Thursday, 30 July 1998, at 10 a.m.

President:

Mr. CHOWDHURY
(Vice-President)

(Bangladesh)

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The meeting was called to order at 10.20 a.m.

SOCIAL AND HUMAN RIGHTS QUESTIONS (continued) (E/1998/59)

- (a) ADVANCEMENT OF WOMEN (continued) (E/1998/L.36)*
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Ms. ANDAYANI (Observer for Indonesia), introducing draft resolution E/1998/L.36* on behalf of the Group of 77 and China, said that the draft resolution was an attempt to address the financial difficulties of the International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women (INSTRAW) and to reflect the importance which her delegation attached to research on the role of women in development. The Director of the Institute, in collaboration with the Board of Trustees and other relevant parties, should draw up a strategy and comprehensive work plan to enable it to attract additional financing from a variety of sources, without prejudice to its autonomy. She trusted that the Council would adopt the draft resolution by consensus and that Member States would provide the additional funding required.

The PRESIDENT invited the Council to take action on draft decision III contained in the report of the Commission on Narcotic Drugs (E/1998/28, chap. I).

Draft decision III was adopted.

Ms. STAMATOPOULOU (Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights), introducing the report of the Secretary-General on the implementation of the Programme of Action for the Third Decade to Combat Racism and Racial Discrimination (E/1998/51), said that at its fifty-fourth session the Commission on Human Rights, after expressing regret at the lack of interest in and financial resources for that Programme, had suggested that the General Assembly should consider other means of financing the Programme, including from the regular budget. It had recommended that the activities of the Programme should

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focused on the preparatory process for the World Conference against Racism.

In connection with that Conference, the Commission had decided to create an open-ended working group to review and formulate proposals for its preparation. The Commission had recommended that the High Commissioner for Human Rights should be designated by the General Assembly as Secretary-General of the Conference and should consult with States to determine a date and venue for it.

Both the Subcommission and CERD had indicated their intention to participate actively in the preparations for the Conference. The Subcommission had expressed the view that the Conference should be an opportunity, not only for developing strategies to combat racism and racial discrimination, but also for examining the interplay between racial and other types of discrimination. CERD had established a contact group to discuss with the Commission and the Office of the High Commissioner (UNHCHR) its input to preparations for the Conference. The Commission had invited CERD to undertake a series of studies to assist the preparations for the Conference and to submit them prior to the fifty-fifth session of the Commission.

CERD and the Subcommission would review at their August 1998 sessions a joint working paper on article 7 of the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination which had been prepared by experts of CERD and the Subcommission.

The report (E/1998/51) summarized the commemoration of the International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination on 20 March 1998 and recent activities undertaken by UNHCHR. She drew the Council's attention to the expert seminar held at the United Nations Office in Geneva from 10 to 14 November 1997 on the role of the Internet in the light of the provisions of the Convention. Experts at that seminar had concluded that the Internet was being abused by racist groups, in contravention of the provisions of the Convention, and that States parties to the Convention should take appropriate steps to stop those activities.

A Racism Project Team had been established by UNHCHR in March 1998 to coordinate all activities related to racism. The Team would also promote liaison with other United Nations bodies, intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations.

The report summarized information received from other United Nations programmes and specialized agencies as well as from Governments and

intergovernmental organizations. She drew particular attention to an initiative of the Council of Europe, which, through the secretariat of the European Commission against Racism and Intolerance (ECRI), had launched an Internet site to combat racism and intolerance. ECRI had taken an innovative country-specific approach, resulting in the publication on its Internet site of in-depth analyses of the problems of racism and intolerance in various countries. The Council of Europe had also indicated its intention to contribute to the preparations for the Conference by organizing a major event similar to those organized for the World Conference on Human Rights and the Fourth World Conference on Women.

Introducing the report of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (E/1998/84), which summarized developments since the comprehensive report to the Commission on Human Rights at its fifty-fourth session, she said that, in addition to reviewing activities for the fiftieth Anniversary of the Universal Declaration on Human Rights, it provided an overview of other notable activities, discussed the outcome of the most recent session of the Commission on Human Rights and analyzed the growing emphasis being placed on strengthening national human rights capacities and integrating human rights throughout the United Nations system.

A notable step forward at the fifty-fourth session of the Commission on Human Rights had been the adoption of a draft declaration on the right and responsibility of individuals, groups and organs of society to promote and protect universally recognized human rights and fundamental freedoms. The adoption of that declaration by the General Assembly would be a most fitting contribution to the fiftieth anniversary year.

Mr. AMMARIN (Jordan)* said that he was speaking on behalf of 51 delegations which wished to record their dissociation from Commission on Human Rights resolution 1998/8 on the question of the death penalty. There was no international consensus on the abolition of capital punishment, as illustrated by previous joint statements in the Council on the same issue. A balance must be achieved between the rights of convicted persons and those of victims and of societies to live in peace and security. It was inappropriate to take decisions in international forums on matters that were for sovereign States alone to decide.

* The full text of this statement will be issued as document E/1998/95.

Mr. KAMITANI (Japan), referring to the Secretary-General's report on implementation of the Programme of Action for the Third Decade to Combat Racism and Racial Discrimination (E/1998/51), noted with considerable surprise, that Japan had been the only State to contribute in 1996 and 1997 to the Trust Fund for the Programme of Action. He further noted that Japan and Turkey had been the only contributors in 1998. It would take time to secure the additional funding needed both to implement the Programme of Action and to prepare for the World Conference against Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia and Related Intolerance in the year 2001. His delegation appealed to all Member States to contribute, as a sign of their commitment to activities to combat racism and racial discrimination.

Ms. TAN (Observer for Singapore) said that Commission on Human Rights resolution 1998/8 on the question of the death penalty did not accurately reflect the views of the international community as a whole. The voting record of the resolution showed that not only was there no international consensus on the abolition of the death penalty but support for the resolution had actually declined since 1997. Singapore had dissociated itself from the resolution, because it represented a significant departure from established norms and international practice. International law did not prohibit capital punishment. The International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights explicitly recognized the right of countries to impose capital punishment for the most serious crimes. Further, the resolution was unbalanced. The "right to life" of convicted prisoners had to be balanced against the "right to life" and the "security of persons" of the victims. Experience had shown that capital punishment preserved and safeguarded the law and order interests of society.

Eleven delegations had formally dissociated themselves from Commission on Human Rights resolution 1998/77 on the question of conscientious objection to military service. They had done so because the resolution went beyond what was prescribed in international law and applicable human rights instruments. While the resolution referred to conscientious objection to military service as the legitimate exercise of the right to freedom of thought, conscience, and religion, it failed to mention that both the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights recognized limitations on the exercise of those rights and freedoms with respect to the need to ensure public safety and the rights and freedoms of others. National

defence was a fundamental sovereign right under international law. Where individual beliefs or actions ran counter to such a right, the right of a State to preserve the security of a nation had to prevail. Compulsory military service was vital to the national security of a small country like Singapore. Further, the principle of equality before the law had to be upheld. By making exceptions for particular groups with regard to compulsory military service, that principle would be undermined.

Mr. MUKHOPADHAYA (India) said that the death penalty was imposed only in very rare cases in India. The presiding judge had to justify the sentence, which required confirmation by a superior court. The accused had a right of appeal both to higher courts and to the Governor of the State or the President of India. There were special provisions for suspension of the death penalty in the case of pregnant women and juvenile offenders. If execution of the sentence was severely delayed, the sentence could be commuted to life imprisonment.

India had not abolished the death penalty, however, and believed that any such decision was a matter for individual States, which should take account of international standards and agreements.

Mr. TALBOT (Guyana) said that his delegation wished to firmly underline its dissociation from Commission on Human Rights resolution 1998/8 on the question of the death penalty. Such decisions were a sovereign prerogative and could not be imposed on States by international bodies.

Mr. REYES RODRIGUEZ (Cuba) drew attention to Commission on Human Rights resolutions 1998/11 on human rights and unilateral coercive measures and 1998/46 on the composition of the staff of the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights. The Council would not take action on those resolutions at the current session, yet both resolutions called for reports from UNHCHR and for action by the Secretary-General and therefore had budget implications. He wanted to know what criteria had been used for deciding whether resolutions should be submitted to the Council.

His delegation deplored the fact that the Council was being forced to consider a report that had not been issued as an official document. The Commission on Human Rights was a subsidiary body of the Council whose work it was the Council's responsibility to coordinate and oversee. At the very least, the Council should be able to examine the results of the work carried out by its subsidiary bodies.

In 1996 the Council had been forced to adopt a draft resolution based on a report it had not seen. At least, however, it had had the text of the draft resolution before it. At the current session, it was being asked to take action on a draft decision (Commission on Human Rights draft decision 1) and did not have before it the text of the resolution to which that draft decision referred. His delegation very much hoped that there would be no recurrence of that situation at future sessions.

Ms. STAMATOPOULOU (Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights) said that resolutions 1998/11 and 1998/46 had no budgetary implications.

Mr. HAMDAN (Lebanon) and Mr. UBALIJORO (Observer for Rwanda) said that they shared Cuba's concerns about the documentation before the Council. UNHCHR should respond to those concerns, so that the Council could avoid such problems in the future.

Ms. STAMATOPOULO (Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights) said that UNHCHR would provide a response at the earliest juncture.

Recommendations contained in the extract from the report of the Commission on Human Rights on its fifty-fourth session (E/1998/L.24)

The PRESIDENT invited the Council to take action on the draft resolutions and draft decisions recommended by the Commission on Human Rights in document E/1998/L.24.

Draft resolutions I to III were adopted.

A recorded vote was taken on draft decision 1.

In favour: Algeria, Argentina, Bangladesh, Brazil, Chile, China, Colombia, Cuba, Djibouti, El Salvador, Guyana, India, Jordan, Lebanon, Lesotho, Mauritius, Mexico, Mozambique, Oman, Pakistan, Russian Federation, Saint Lucia, Sri Lanka, Tunisia, Turkey, Viet Nam.

Against: Belgium, Canada, Finland, Germany, Iceland, Italy, Japan, Nicaragua, Poland, Spain, Sweden, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America.

Abstaining: Belarus, Czech Republic, France, Latvia, New Zealand, Republic of Korea, Romania.

Draft decision 1 was adopted by 26 votes to 13, with 7 abstentions.*

A recorded vote was taken on draft decision 2.

In favour: Algeria, Argentina, Bangladesh, Brazil, Chile, China, Colombia, Cuba, Djibouti, El Salvador, Guyana, India, Jordan, Lebanon, Lesotho, Mauritius, Mexico, Mozambique, Oman, Pakistan, Saint Lucia, Sri Lanka, Togo, Tunisia, Turkey, Viet Nam.

Against: Belarus, Belgium, Canada, Cape Verde, Czech Republic, Finland, France, Germany, Iceland, Italy, Japan, New Zealand, Nicaragua, Poland, Romania, Russian Federation, Spain, Sweden, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America.

Abstaining: Latvia, Republic of Korea.

Draft decision 2 was adopted by 26 votes to 20, with 2 abstentions.*

Draft decisions 4 to 8 were adopted.

A recorded vote was taken on draft decision 9.

In favour: Algeria, Bangladesh, Cape Verde, China, Colombia, Cuba, Djibouti, Guyana, India, Jordan, Lebanon, Lesotho, Mauritius, Mozambique, Oman, Pakistan, Saint Lucia, Sri Lanka, Togo, Tunisia, Turkey, Viet Nam.

Against: Belarus, Belgium, Canada, Czech Republic, Finland, France, Germany, Iceland, Italy, Japan, Latvia, New Zealand, Poland, Romania, Russian Federation, Spain, Sweden, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America.

Abstaining: Argentina, Brazil, Chile, El Salvador, Mexico, Nicaragua, Republic of Korea.

Draft decision 9 was adopted by 22 votes to 19, with 7 abstentions.

Draft decisions 10 to 19 were adopted.

Mr. TAKAHASHI (Japan), speaking with reference to draft decision 20, said that, as a current member of the Security Council, Japan subscribed to the statement made by the President of the Security Council on 13 July 1998 concerning the situation of human rights in the Democratic Republic of the

* The delegation of Nicaragua subsequently informed the Council that it had intended to vote in favour of the draft resolution.

Congo. His delegation regretted that the Secretary-General's investigative team had not been allowed to carry out its mission fully and without hindrance. However, it welcomed the announcement of 19 May 1998 by the Government of the Democratic Republic of the Congo with regard to its emphasis on policies to promote human rights, improve the judicial system and appoint a Minister responsible for human rights, and it strongly hoped that those measures would be carried out as soon as possible. The Government of Japan believed that democratization, good governance, respect for human rights and appropriate humanitarian measures for refugees would contribute to the stable development of the Democratic Republic of the Congo and was prepared to assist the Government in its efforts in those areas.

Draft decision 20 was adopted.

Mr. RWUBUSISI (Observer for the Democratic Republic of the Congo) said that Commission on Human Rights resolution 1998/61, to which decision 20 referred, was the result of an erroneous, if not imaginary, report that had no basis in fact. The Security Council had already considered the situation of human rights in the Democratic Republic of the Congo and had requested the Government of that country to submit an interim report to the Secretary-General. To ensure that the many positive developments in that country were taken into account, the United Nations should avoid requesting multiple entities to look into the situation and instead should entrust that responsibility to the Secretary-General alone.

His Government had formally expressed its willingness to cooperate with the United Nations system, in particular by agreeing to end the culture of impunity. It had already established a Ministry of Human Rights, and it would appreciate material support and technical assistance from the United Nations for the reconstruction of its legal system so that all individuals involved in alleged human rights violations could be brought to justice.

The stability of the Great Lakes region and of the Democratic Republic of the Congo must be preserved. Attempts to undermine the Governments of the region through resolutions based on imaginary allegations would only compromise efforts to reinforce that stability. The Security Council had asked the international community to assist his country in compensating and rehabilitating victims of war and of human rights violations. His Government welcomed programmes to reduce ethnic tensions and to promote equal rights for all. It

was convinced that such assistance would help the people, who had lived under a virtual international embargo since 1991, to gain access to fundamental rights such as food, drinking water, high-quality health care, education and security of person and property. Once acquired, those rights would reduce the conflicts that ravaged the region and would create the conditions necessary for political and economic stability.

Draft decisions 21 and 22 were adopted.

Mr. AL-HUMAIMIDI (Observer for Iraq), speaking with reference to draft decision 23, said that Iraq's delegation had tried in vain to inject some balance and impartiality into the provisions of Commission on Human Rights resolution 1998/65 on the situation of human rights in Iraq. Its efforts had been rejected out of hand, for political reasons that had nothing to do with human rights. The resulting resolution was a combination of false and subjective accusations and assertions that did not stand up to reason or logical analysis. For example, the resolution called on Iraq to cease immediately its repressive practices aimed at the Iraqi Kurds in the north (1998/65, para. 3 (h)). Yet, the whole world knew that the area in question been under United States and United Kingdom occupation since 1991 and Iraq no longer had a military or administrative apparatus there. Indeed, the United States Assistant Secretary of State and State Department officials had recently visited northern Iraq, illegally entering the area through Turkey. In such a situation, it was hard to see how Iraq could carry out the actions to which the resolution referred.

There was no logical basis or justification for the resolution, which took no account of the genocide inflicted on the people of Iraq by eight years of sanctions. The sponsors should have mentioned the impact of the sanctions on Iraq, including the deaths of over one and a half million children, instead of which they had followed a political agenda, being driven by Western Powers, particularly the United States and the United Kingdom, against Iraq. The Council should reject the resolution for that reason.

Mr. WINNICK (United States of America), responding to the statement by the representative of Iraq, noted that at the same time the Iraqi authorities were decrying the effects of Security Council resolutions, they had also submitted a request to the Security Council Committee established by resolution 661 (1990) concerning the situation between Iraq and Kuwait to import \$733

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million worth of dinnerware.

A recorded vote was taken on draft decision 23.

In favour: Argentina, Belarus, Belgium, Brazil, Canada, Chile, Czech Republic, El Salvador, Finland, France, Germany, Guyana, Iceland, Italy, Japan, Latvia, Mexico, New Zealand, Nicaragua, Poland, Republic of Korea, Romania, Russian Federation, Spain, Sweden, Turkey, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America.

Against: None.

Abstaining: Algeria, Bangladesh, Cape Verde, China, Colombia, Cuba, Djibouti, India, Jordan, Lebanon, Mozambique, Pakistan, Saint Lucia, Sri Lanka, Togo, Tunisia, Viet Nam.

Draft decision 23 was adopted by 28 votes to 0, with 17 abstentions.

Draft decisions 24 to 32 were adopted.

Mr. ROGOV (Russian Federation), said that his delegation's joining the consensus on draft decision 32 in no way indicated a change of its position with regard to Commission on Human Rights resolution 1998/79.

Mr. AFSHARI (Observer for the Islamic Republic of Iran), speaking in explanation of vote before the voting on draft decision 33, said that the Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action had recognized the need to enhance international cooperation in the field of human rights on the basis of dialogue and transparency. It was imperative that the United Nations human rights machinery should exert every effort to facilitate dialogue and cooperation. The Islamic Republic of Iran had been prepared to cooperate in good faith with the United Nations human rights procedures and mechanisms and had consistently endeavoured to build a constructive process with a view to placing the whole issue in its proper context and exploring mutually accepted formulas. The new Government accorded a high priority to the promotion and protection of human rights in line with its Constitution and with Islamic values and was taking many initiatives to further institutionalize the rule of law and respect for human rights. At the fifty-fourth session of the Commission on Human Rights, the delegation of the Islamic Republic of Iran had made sincere efforts to work closely with the sponsors of the draft resolution on the situation of human rights in Iran with a view to arriving at a consensus, but the sponsors' partial and selective approach had prevented such a consensus from emerging. Since the

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text of the resolution reflected that subjective attitude and uncooperative approach, his delegation called on members of the Council to refrain from supporting the decision under consideration.

Mr. HAMDAN (Lebanon), speaking in explanation of vote before the voting on draft decision 33, said that since the election of a new Government in the Islamic Republic of Iran there had been encouraging developments with regard to human rights and the principles of democracy. As it was the duty of the international community to encourage that Government to continue its current policies, his delegation would not participate in the vote on the draft decision under consideration.

A recorded vote was taken on draft decision 33.

In favour: Algeria, Argentina, Belgium, Brazil, Canada, Chile, Czech Republic, El Salvador, Finland, France, Germany, Guyana, Iceland, Italy, Japan, Latvia, New Zealand, Nicaragua, Poland, Romania, Russian Federation, Spain, Sweden, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America.

Against: Bangladesh, China, Cuba, India, Jordan, Oman, Pakistan, Viet Nam.

Abstaining: Belarus, Cape Verde, Colombia, Djibouti, Mexico, Mozambique, Republic of Korea, Saint Lucia, Sri Lanka, Togo, Tunisia.

Draft decision 33 was adopted by 25 votes to 8, with 11 abstentions.

Draft decisions 34 and 35 were adopted.

A recorded vote was taken on draft decision 36.

In favour: Algeria, Argentina, Bangladesh, Brazil, Chile, China, Colombia, Cuba, Djibouti, El Salvador, Guyana, India, Jordan, Lebanon, Lesotho, Mauritius, Mexico, Mozambique, Nicaragua, Oman, Pakistan, Republic of Korea, Saint Lucia, Sri Lanka, Togo, Tunisia, Turkey, Viet Nam.

Against: Belarus, Belgium, Canada, Czech Republic, Finland, France, Germany, Iceland, Italy, Japan, Latvia, New Zealand, Romania, Russian Federation, Spain, Sweden, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America.

Abstaining: Poland.

Draft decision 36 was adopted by 28 votes to 18, with 1 abstention.

Draft decision 37 was adopted.

Mr. AMMARIN (Jordan), supported by Mr. HAMDAN (Lebanon), said the fact that the Special Rapporteur on human rights and population transfer had submitted three reports should be noted in draft decision 38 and the word "final" should be deleted from the fourth line, along with the document symbol for the report in question.

Mr. THEUERMANN (Observer for Austria) said that his delegation would prefer the wording adopted by the Commission to be retained.

Mr. HYNES (Canada) agreed with the observer for Austria, as the proposed amendment could have additional financial implications.

The PRESIDENT said that action on draft decision 38 would be postponed to allow those questions to be clarified.

Mr. MARTINEZ-AGUILAR (Mexico), speaking with reference to draft decision 39, said that, while his Government recognized that terrorist acts affected the promotion and protection of human rights, it did not believe that the proposed study would further the fight against terrorism. Since terrorist acts were criminal, they should be prosecuted by the legal system of the affected State.

A recorded vote was taken on draft decision 39.

In favour: Algeria, Bangladesh, Belarus, Brazil, China, Colombia, Cuba, Djibouti, El Salvador, Guyana, India, Lesotho, Mozambique, Oman, Pakistan, Republic of Korea, Russian Federation, Saint Lucia, Sri Lanka, Togo, Tunisia, Turkey, Viet Nam.

Against: None.

Abstaining: Argentina, Belgium, Canada, Cape Verde, Chile, Czech Republic, Finland, France, Germany, Iceland, Italy, Japan, Latvia, Mexico, New Zealand, Nicaragua, Poland, Romania, Spain, Sweden, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America.

Draft decision 39 was adopted by 23 votes to none, with 22 abstentions.

Draft decisions 40 to 42 were adopted.

The PRESIDENT said that the dates of the fifty-fifth session of the Commission on Human Rights, scheduled for 15 March to 23 April 1999, would be reflected in the calendar of conferences, which would come before the Council for adoption before the end of its session.

Mr. RODRIGUEZ (Cuba) said that for the first time in seven years the

Council had been spared the politically-motivated exercise, imposed on it by the United States of America, of considering the so-called situation of human rights in Cuba. The Commission's decision to end that extraordinary exercise and to terminate the work of the Special Rapporteur was an outcome that transcended one country and its particular situation: it stood as an endorsement of the willingness for dialogue. Democracy and consensus could exist only when accompanied by respect for different opinions.

His delegation wished to make it clear that it would not accept the re-imposition of any discriminatory human rights procedure or mechanism and expected the international community to avert any attempt at a return to the past.

In conclusion, he reiterated Cuba's readiness to engage in dialogue and multilateral and bilateral cooperation with all States on the basis of mutual respect and the Charter principles of universality, indivisibility, objectivity and non-selectivity. The noble cause of human rights should not be held hostage to political interests, and in the future Cuba hoped that dialogue would prevail over confrontation.

Mr. THEUERMANN (Observer for Austria), speaking on behalf of the European Union, said that the Union followed very closely the human rights situation in the countries under review by the Commission on Human Rights. It had expressed itself publicly on numerous occasions concerning a number of those situations. Since Council had been asked to endorse in procedural terms the extension or establishment of thematic and country mandates, it had not made substantive statements on the merits of specific situations, but it would continue to express itself on those issues at the fifty-third session of the General Assembly. With respect to the death penalty, the Union would work to strengthen international activities towards its universal abolition and, where it still existed, would call for restrictions or a moratorium on its use.

Finally, he said it was regrettable that the report of the Commission on Human Rights on its fifty-fourth session had not been available to the Council, given the importance of adequate documentation to its work.

Recommendations contained in the report of the Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights on its sixteenth and seventeenth sessions and programme budget implications thereto (E/1998/22 and L.4)

The PRESIDENT drew attention to the recommendations contained in the

report of the Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (E/1998/22) and reminded the Council that it had decided to postpone consideration of those recommendations at its 1997 session.

Mr. HYNES (Canada) said that, while his delegation was sympathetic to the requests the Committee was making and did not want to delay the consideration unduly, updated proposals were needed before the Council could responsibly take action.

The PRESIDENT said that consideration of that matter would be postponed pending the results of informal consultations.

COORDINATION, PROGRAMME AND OTHER QUESTIONS (continued)

(b) MALARIA AND DIARRHOEAL DISEASES, IN PARTICULAR CHOLERA (continued)
(E/1998/L.30 and L.37)

(f) INTERNATIONAL YEAR FOR THE CULTURE OF PEACE, 2000 (continued)
(E/1998/L.31 and L.38)

The PRESIDENT said that draft resolution E/1998/L.37 had no programme budget implications. In paragraph 11, the words "in collaboration with the Director-General of the World Health Organization and" should be replaced with the words "by the Director-General of the World Health Organization in collaboration with".

Draft resolution E/1998/L.37, as orally revised, was adopted.

The PRESIDENT said he took it that the sponsors of draft resolution E/1998/L.30 wished to withdraw it, in the light of the adoption of resolution E/1998/L.37.

It was so decided.

The PRESIDENT said that draft resolution E/1998/L.38 had no programme budget implications.

Draft resolution E/1998/L.38 was adopted.

The PRESIDENT said he took it that the sponsors of draft resolution E/1998/L.31 wished to withdraw it, in the light of the adoption of resolution E/1998/L.38.

It was so decided.

IMPLEMENTATION OF THE DECLARATION ON THE GRANTING OF INDEPENDENCE TO COLONIAL COUNTRIES AND PEOPLES BY THE SPECIALIZED AGENCIES AND THE INTERNATIONAL INSTITUTIONS ASSOCIATED WITH THE UNITED NATIONS (continued) (A/53/153-E/1998/75; E/1998/L.22)

Mr. BENÍTEZ VERSÓN (Cuba) said that Algeria, Colombia, Grenada, India,

Lebanon, Namibia and Togo should be added to the list of sponsors of draft resolution E/1998/L.22.

A recorded vote was taken on draft resolution E/1998/L.22.

In favour: Algeria, Argentina, Bangladesh, Brazil, Cape Verde, Chile, China, Colombia, Cuba, Djibouti, El Salvador, Guyana, India, Lesotho, Mexico, Mozambique, New Zealand, Nicaragua, Republic of Korea, Saint Lucia, Togo, Tunisia, Turkey, Viet Nam.

Against: None.

Abstaining: Belarus, Belgium, Canada, Czech Republic, Finland, France, Gabon, Germany, Iceland, Italy, Japan, Latvia, Poland, Romania, Russian Federation, Spain, Sweden, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America.

Draft resolution E/1998/L.22 was adopted by 24 votes to none, with 19 abstentions.*

Mr. PANKIN (Russian Federation) said that his delegation had abstained from voting because the issue of decolonization was being discussed by the General Assembly. The Council's consideration of that purely political issue diverted its attention from its primary function of coordinating United Nations activities in the economic and social fields.

The PRESIDENT said he took it that the Council wished to take note of the report of the Secretary-General on assistance to the Palestinian people, contained in document A/53/153-E/1998/75.

It was so decided.

ECONOMIC AND ENVIRONMENTAL QUESTIONS (continued) (E/1998/L.33)

(a) SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT (continued) (E/1998/L.27-L.29, L.34 and L.39)

The PRESIDENT said that draft decision E/1998/L.33 had no programme budget implications. The phrase "taking into account views expressed by Governments during the discussion of the report of the Secretary-General at the fifty-third session of the General Assembly" should be added at the end of the last paragraph of the draft decision.

Mr. WINNICK (United States of America) said that his delegation wished to join the list of sponsors of the draft decision.

* The delegation of Lebanon subsequently informed the Council that it had intended to vote in favour of the draft resolution.

Draft decision E/1998/L.33, as orally revised, was adopted.

The PRESIDENT said that draft resolution E/1998/L.39 had no programme budget implications.

Mr. HAPSORO (Observer for Indonesia), speaking on behalf of the Group of 77 and China, said that draft resolution E/1998/L.39 was well-balanced and took into account the concerns of the parties involved. He hoped that, at its next session, the Committee for Development Planning would make the assessment mentioned in paragraph 2 of the draft resolution.

Draft resolution E/1998/L.39 was adopted.

Mr. RAVOU-AKII (Observer for Vanuatu) said that he fully supported the statement made by the Observer for Indonesia. The resolution would give experts the flexibility they needed to carry out the work recommended in the Barbados Programme of Action.

Mr. WINNICK (United States of America) said that his delegation had joined the consensus on the resolution just adopted because the Committee for Development Planning had not submitted its views on the usefulness of a vulnerability index, pursuant to General Assembly resolution 52/210. However, he was still concerned about the many methodological problems associated with the formulation and application of a meaningful vulnerability index. His Government used the Organization's list of least developed countries in determining which countries should benefit from its generalized system of preferences. However, it would have to reconsider the use of that list if the current robust methodology for designating least developed countries was changed in a manner that undermined the strength of its analysis.

The PRESIDENT said he took it that the sponsors of draft resolution E/1998/L.27 wished to withdraw it, in the light of the adoption of resolution E/1998/L.39.

It was so decided.

The PRESIDENT said that, in the first line of paragraph 5 of draft resolution E/1998/L.28, the words "all relevant entities of the United Nations system, including the United Nations Environment Programme, as well as" should be inserted after the words "in cooperation with".

Mr. CABACTULAN (Observer for the Philippines) said he understood that an agreement had been reached in informal consultations to insert the words "and tolerance" after the words "fostering better understanding" in the penultimate

preambular paragraph of the draft resolution. In addition, Australia, New Zealand, Tajikistan and Turkmenistan wished to join the list of sponsors.

Mr. ÖZÜGERGIN (Turkey) said that he, too, had understood that that change was to be made to the penultimate preambular paragraph. His delegation also wished to join the list of sponsors.

Draft resolution E/1998/L.28, as orally revised, was adopted.

The PRESIDENT said that draft resolution E/1998/L.34 had no programme budget implications.

Draft resolution E/1998/L.34 was adopted.

The PRESIDENT said he took it that the sponsors of draft resolution E/1998/L.29 wished to withdraw it, in the light of the adoption of resolution E/1998/L.34.

It was so decided.

Statements in exercise of the right of reply

Mr. SHAPIRO (United States of America), speaking in exercise of the right of reply, said that the statement of the representative of Cuba had called into question the motives of his delegation in sponsoring the draft resolution on the situation of human rights in Cuba. The United States would continue to be concerned about the repression practised by the last dictatorship in the Western hemisphere. The time had come for change.

Mr. REYES RODRÍGUEZ (Cuba) said that Cuba's earlier statement had been made in a constructive and friendly spirit intended to foster dialogue and that the reply by the United States delegation had shown arrogance and lack of imagination. The competent United Nations human rights bodies had already made a determination concerning the full exercise of human rights in Cuba. On the other hand, the reports of the Special Rapporteur on extrajudicial, summary or arbitrary executions and the Special Rapporteur on contemporary forms of racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance, as well as news reports concerning police brutality, had raised questions about the human rights situation in the United States.

Under its policy of hostility towards Cuba, the United States had not only waged an economic war and used food and medicine as instruments of genocide; it had also financed and organized terrorist operations and internal subversion against the Cuban Government. Cuba had never had a situation of massive and systematic human rights violations that would have justified the appointment of

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a Special Rapporteur. The entire exercise had been a clumsy act of political manipulation and a glaring example of the double standard applied in United States policy. The United States delegation's attempt to call into question the recent decision of the Commission on Human Rights opened a new chapter in its policy of manipulating human rights mechanisms for political ends, seriously disrupting procedures and undermining the authority of United Nations bodies. Nonetheless, Cuba trusted that those efforts would be defeated by the international community's resolve and by its own willingness to engage in dialogue.

The meeting rose at 1.10 p.m.